



## Southern Pine Beetle Update II

By John J. Riggins, Forest Entomologist

The southern pine beetle (*Dendroctonus frontalis*, Fig. 1, see page 2) continues to have increased impacts on Mississippi forests during the summer of 2012. During late May and throughout June, foresters on the Homochitto National Forest in Southwest Mississippi began reporting a growing number of active SPB spots. During an initial survey flight during early June, more than 80 spots were detected. Most of these spots were on Forest Service land, but a few were on private lands. The Mississippi Forestry Commission is working closely with the U.S.D.A. Forest Service to identify and notify landowners affected by this apparent SPB outbreak. Another detection flight during late June/early July indicated at least 175 new SPB spots in and around the Homochitto at that time. Most recently, an aerial detection flight reported over 200 more SPB spots, bringing the total number of infestations in and around the Homochitto to over 500.

I recently visited some of the spots on the Homochitto, and some were still very active and rapidly expanding, despite being mid-summer and very

hot, which typically slows SPB spot expansion. State and Federal foresters are working hard to treat spots with salvage cuts or cut and leave operations (Fig. 2, see page 2), however USDA Forest Service suppression funds are low and could eventually lead to slowed or halted suppression activities if more funds are not allocated.

Landowners in Franklin, Amite, Wilkinson, Adams, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Copiah Counties are urged to be diligent and conduct inspections of their lands to determine if SPB activity is present. This

[publication](#)

(<http://naldc.nal.usda.gov/download/CAT87208970/PDF>)

provides a good overview of SPB signs and symptoms. If any SPB activity is suspected, please contact your local MFC office. Timely salvage or cut and leave operations can dramatically limit total timber losses incurred due to a SPB outbreak, and can limit a landowners liability should the infestation spread to adjacent properties. Landowners in the rest of the state are also encouraged to pay close attention for SPB activity. No other major outbreaks are known of or anticipated for the rest of the State at this time, but forest stakeholders throughout Mississippi should keep a close

eye on things as this year progresses.

### For additional information contact:

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Figure 1: The southern pine beetle (*Dendroctonus frontalis*) is historically the most destructive forest insect pest of Southeastern forests.



Figure 2: Cut and leave operation on Homochitto National Forest in August 2012.



Figure 3: SPB attack densities are very high in some spots, as evidenced by pitch tubes on this tree in Homochitto National Forest on 7/31/2012. Photo Credit, John Riggins